

VZCZCXYZ0022
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHKT #2776/01 2911250
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 181250Z OCT 06
FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3513
INFO RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE 5127
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA IMMEDIATE 0278
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 3121
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 4516
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 0370
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE 1001
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 2019
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 002776

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/18/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [UN](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: INDIAN CHARGE ADAMANT ON MAOIST ARMS MANAGEMENT,
SUPPORTS ROBUST UN ENGAGEMENT IN NEPAL

REF: A. KATHMANDU 2774

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 2773

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nicholas Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) CDA called on Indian Charge Dr. Kheya Bhattacharya October 18 to discuss UN Nepal peace team leader Ian Martin's trip to New Delhi the day before and the overall status of the peace process. She applauded Prime Minister Koirala's firm stance on the need for the Maoists to disarm before entering the Government of Nepal (GON). Bhattacharya was adamant that there be no equivalence between the Nepal Army and the Maoist People's Liberation Army. The Indian Charge also underscored the need for the GON to restore law and order. Dr. Bhattacharya ventured that the Maoists have gone too far down the path toward peace to turn back. The Indian Charge underlined the upsurge in expectations from the people of Nepal for the peace process and the resulting pressure on the GON and Maoists alike. She applauded a robust role for the UN in Nepal.

Arms Management a Must

[1](#)2. (C) Newly-appointed Indian DCM and hence Charge Dr. Kheya Bhattacharya told CDA October 18 that the most critical element of the peace process under way in Nepal was for the GON to stand firm on Maoist arms management. She expressed satisfaction with Prime Minister Koirala's endurance in maintaining this position during repeated summit talks sessions under tremendous pressure from the Maoists. Dr. Bhattacharya credited Seven-Party Alliance (SPA) cohesion, at least staunch support for the Prime Minister (Nepali Congress) by Nepali Congress-Democratic leader Sher Bahadur Deuba, with backing up the GON's position. She was less complimentary regarding the role of the mutable Communist Party of Nepal - United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and the lesser, left-leaning members of the SPA.

Support for GON

13. (C) Bhattacharya reiterated India's strong support for the GON and rejection of any suggestion of any equivalence between the Nepal Army and the People's Liberation Army. She agreed with CDA on the importance of a vigorous and continuous exchange of views between the Indian and U.S. missions. The Indian Charge suggested that strong external support for the Government of Nepal remained crucial in sustaining its self confidence and a hard line on the central issue of the Nepal peace process, arms management. She noted that India had been very consistent in messages it had sent to both the GON and the Maoists that there was no equivalence between the Nepal Army and the People's Liberation Army and that arms management must precede Maoist entry into the government.

Law and Order

14. (C) The Indian Charge bemoaned the law enforcement vacuum in Nepal, describing continued Maoist extortion and kidnapping as hardly the evidence of changed behavior that the international community sought. She regretted that repeated Indian entreaties to the GON simply to enforce the laws already on the books had been delivered without effect. While the political class in Kathmandu reveled in the holiday atmosphere as the beloved Hindu celebration of Tihar approached and rejoiced at the imminent prospect of peace, the bulk of Nepalis, who live in rural regions, faced the consequences of a law and order vacuum and Maoist criminality. Bhattacharya estimated that as much as 30 percent of the Maoist militia, which operated largely in rural areas, were criminals recruited by the Maoist militia.

Maoists Past Point of No Return

15. (C) Bhattacharya repeatedly volunteered the view that the Maoists were past the point of return in terms of their commitment to the peace process. She observed that the Maoists had not gone nearly as far in committing to the process in previous negotiations, nor had they been as integrated into the fabric of public discussion as much as they presently were. The Indian Charge pointed to the Maoist leadership's almost incessant appearances in the media as evidence that they were already, in a sense, entering the mainstream. Dr. Bhattacharya noted that the Indians consistently made the point to Maoists every time they met that the current peace process represented the best chance the Maoists had had in the past ten years to peacefully influence the direction of Nepal's development.

Great Expectations

16. (C) Bhattacharya, who was previously the Minister for Economic Cooperation at the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, noted the perspective her development work had given her on the aspirations of the average Nepali. One measure of the thirst for development was the tripling of the budget for India's demand-driven, community-based development programs in Nepal over the past year. The average Nepali, especially those outside of Kathmandu, had tremendous expectations of both the GON and the Maoists to reach a peace accord and take concrete steps to help them build better lives. While these expectations resulted in considerable pressure on the GON to deliver, Bhattacharya suggested, the pressure was even greater on the Maoists to reach a peace deal and cease the insurgency, enter the GON, and provide services.

UN Role

17. (C) The Indian Charge was unequivocal in welcoming a primary role for the United Nations in helping the GON and Maoists to resolve the ten-year insurgency in Nepal. She said, while she had yet to receive a detailed readout from UN peace team leader Ian Martin's consultations in New Delhi, she was confident that India would support arms management

formulations proposed by the UN. Bhattacharya agreed that the presence of a fully staffed UN Nepal peace mission was a significant shot in the arm for the GON, noticeably boosting the GON's self confidence. That said she wondered what portion of the GON's self confidence resulted from holiday cheer, remarking that the Maoists' buoyant mood might also be at least partly derived from that source.

Comment

18. (C) The Indian Charge's strong stance on the need for Maoist arms management and welcome for a substantial role for the United Nations in Nepal's peace process reflects a continuation of a familiar Indian policy on Nepal that closely tracks our own. Close cooperation between the United States and India is essential to a successful outcome of Nepal's peace process, as is Indian support for the GON and for a robust role for the United Nations. The oddly familiar ring of the Indian position, in particular their rejection of equivalence between the Nepal Army and the People's Liberation Army, is reflected in almost identical comments by the Prime Minister's foreign policy advisor (ref B). Clearly, when New Delhi speaks, Kathmandu listens.
DEAN